

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 087334

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R 101139Z APR 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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E.O. 11652:

TAGS:

SUBJECT:

REF: JAKARTA 4612 (NOTAL)

FROM HABIB TO AMBASSADORS ONLY

TOKYO FOR DONALD S. HARRIS

SEOUL FOR DONALD S. HARRIS

1. DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN GIVING CONSIDERATION TO CONVERTING
POSITION OF LABOR ATTACHE IN JAKARTA TO REGIONAL POSI-
TION WHICH WOULD ALSO COVER SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA.

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PAGE 02 STATE 087334

AMBASSADOR NEWSOM, IN RESPONSE TO MY QUERY ON THE SUBJECT,

HAS EXPRESSED VIEW THAT LABOR FUNCTION IN JAKARTA IS NOT A FULL-TIME JOB, AN OPINION SHARED BY PRESENT INCUMBENT (WHO IS DUE TO LEAVE JAKARTA IN JUNE) AND WHICH ALSO ACCORDS WITH LAST INSPECTION REPORT. WHILE ALTERNATIVE OF GIVING LABOR ATTACHE PART-TIME ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS HAS BEEN POSED AS A SECOND ALTERNATIVE, WE BELIEVE THAT PREFERABLE COURSE WOULD BE ASSUMPTION OF REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES. THIS WOULD, OF COURSE, BE CONTINGENT ON APPROVAL

OF AMBASSADORS CONCERNED AND YOUR ESTIMATES AS TO AMOUNT OF TIME THAT REGIONAL LABOR ATTACHE BASED IN JAKARTA SHOULD SPEND IN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE.

2. SEVERAL FACTORS ARE APPARENT HERE THAT WOULD SEEM TO MAKE INCREASED REPORTING WITH AN INTERNATIONAL LABOR DIMENSION USEFUL FROM MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE INCLUDING (A) FACT THAT P.P. NARAYANAN, MALAYSIA'S LEADING LABOR MOVEMENT FIGURE, IS NOW PRESIDENT OF ICFTU, (B) ZAIDI'S (MALAYSIA) POSITION IN ILO, (C) PRESENCE ON ICFTU EXECUTIVE BOARD OF INFLUENTIAL MEMBERS FROM SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA AND (D) INCREASED ACTIVITY OF ICFTU ASIAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION (ARO) AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH AFL-CIO. LATTER WILL BE CARRIED OUT CHIEFLY THROUGH AAFLI AND THIS WILL REQUIRE MORE TIME AND ATTENTION FROM EMBASSIES BECAUSE OF RECENT STATE AND AID COMMITMENTS TO CONGRESS TO PROVIDE MORE GUIDANCE TO AAFLI. ADDITIONAL FACTOR MAY BE INCREASED ATTENTION BY ALL THESE COUNTRIES TO DEVELOPMENT OF AN ASEAN CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS. US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, AS WELL AS STATE, HAVE CONTINUING INTEREST IN FOLLOWING LABOR DEVELOPMENTS, PARTICULARLY INCLUDING ROLE OF THESE COUNTRIES ON INTERNATIONAL LABOR SCENE.

3. DEPARTMENT IS CONSIDERING ASSIGNMENT OF SENIOR AND EXPERIENCED LABOR OFFICER TO THIS REGIONAL POSITION, PROBABLY BOB SENSER WHO IS CURRENTLY DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF AID'S OFFICE OF LABOR AFFAIRS.

4. I SUPPORT THIS PROPOSAL AS BEST APPARENT METHOD FOR MORE FULLY UTILIZING TALENTS OF LABOR OFFICER ASSIGNED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 087334

TO JAKARTA AND FOR CONTRIBUTING TO INCREASED LABOR REPORTING NEEDS IN RESPECT TO MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE. YOUR EARLY TELEGRAPHIC REPLY WOULD BE APPRECIATED. KISSINGER

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